RSAC 2025 Conference

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One Community.

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Charting a Course for Women Leadership in Cyber

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Problem Statement

- Everyone already knows there is a **shortage of women in STEM roles**, cybersecurity in particular.
- Women feel they are being held back and negatively affected by the **recent rollbacks in DEI programs.**

According to all study respondents, women make up 22% of security teams on average.
2024 ISC2 Cybersecurity Workforce Study

Let's explore how this may impact progression into leadership roles and **what we can do about it.**

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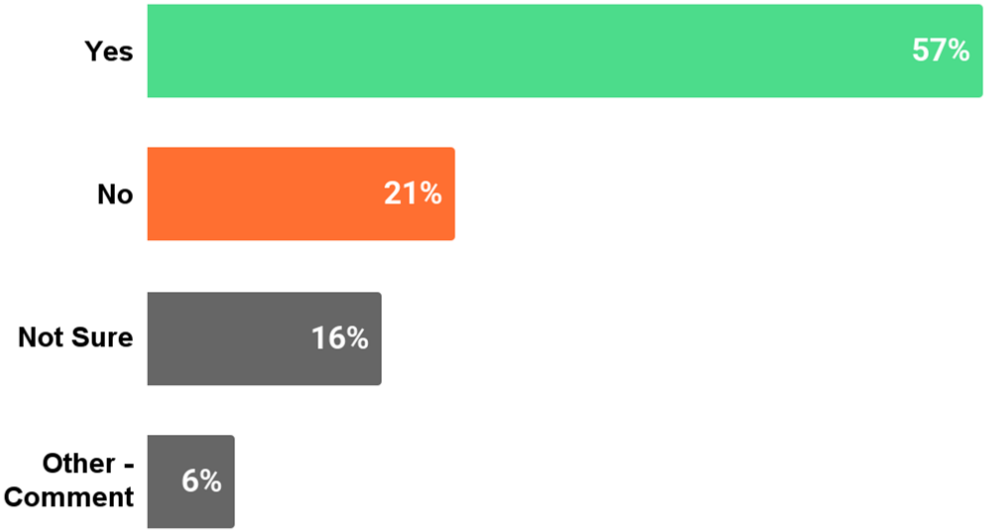
Live Poll

LinkedIn Poll Results

Q: Women in Cyber, do you think the recent elimination of DEI programs will negatively affect your career?



LinkedIn Poll launched on February 19th, 2025

87 Votes

Link to Poll

Google: Project Aristotle

A study released by Google analyzes data on inventive and productive teams:

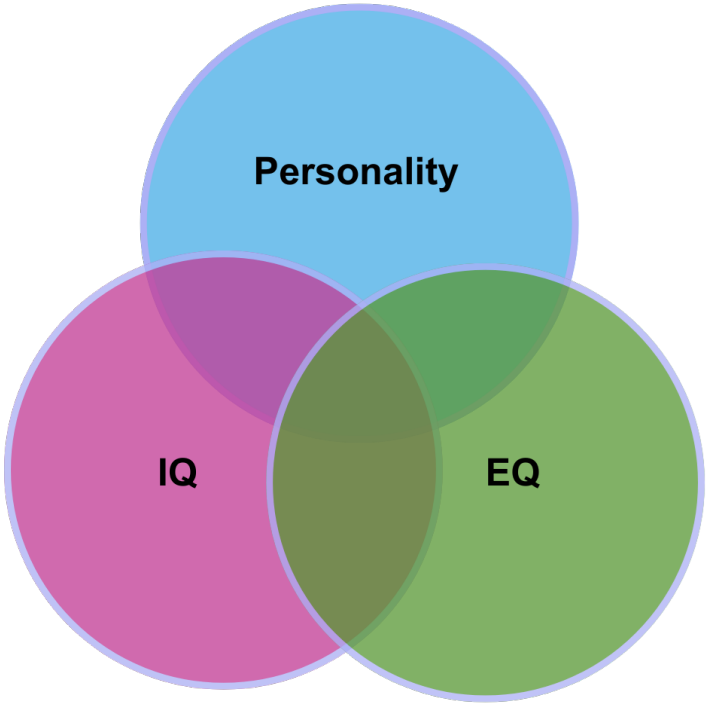
- Google A-teams are built with top scientists with specialized knowledge
- Google B-teams are comprised of regular employees
- Project Aristotle revealed that Google's most important and productive new ideas come from B-teams that exhibit a range of soft skills:
  - **Equality, generosity, curiosity** toward the ideas of one's teammates
  - **Empathy, and emotional intelligence**
  - And topping the list? **Emotional Safety** - no bullying. Each and every team member must feel confident to speak up, make mistakes, and know their voice matters.

Sources: The New York Times and Psych Safety

IQ and EQ Defined

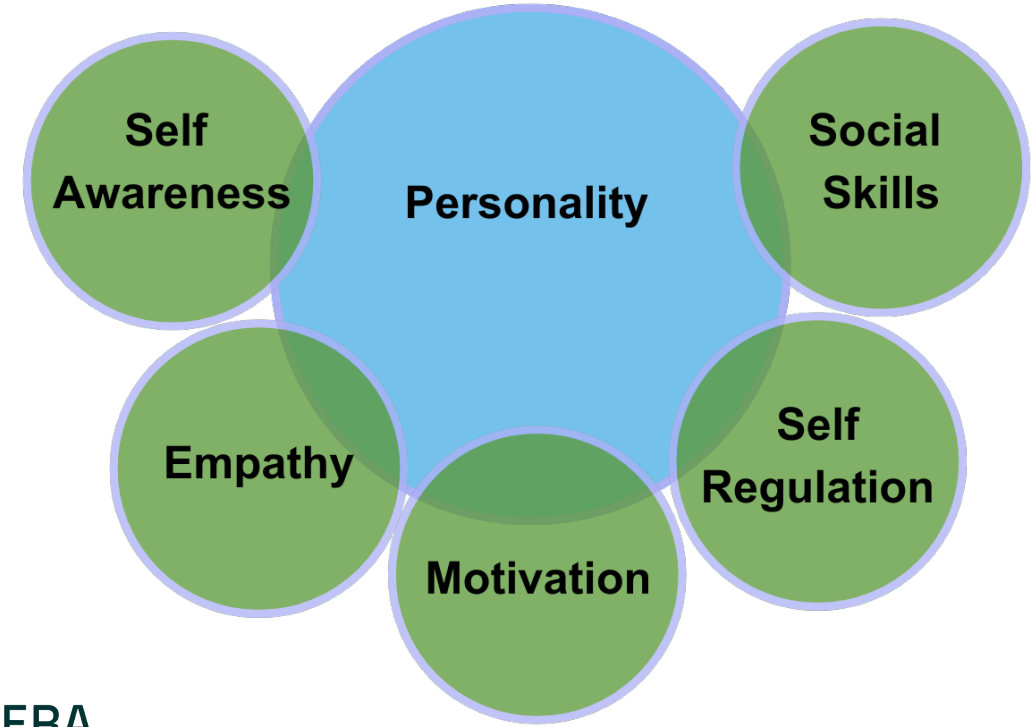
EQ (noun)
The capacity to be aware of, control, and express one's emotions, and to handle interpersonal relationships judiciously and empathetically.

IQ (noun)
Abbreviation for intelligence quotient: a person's level of intelligence measured by tests).

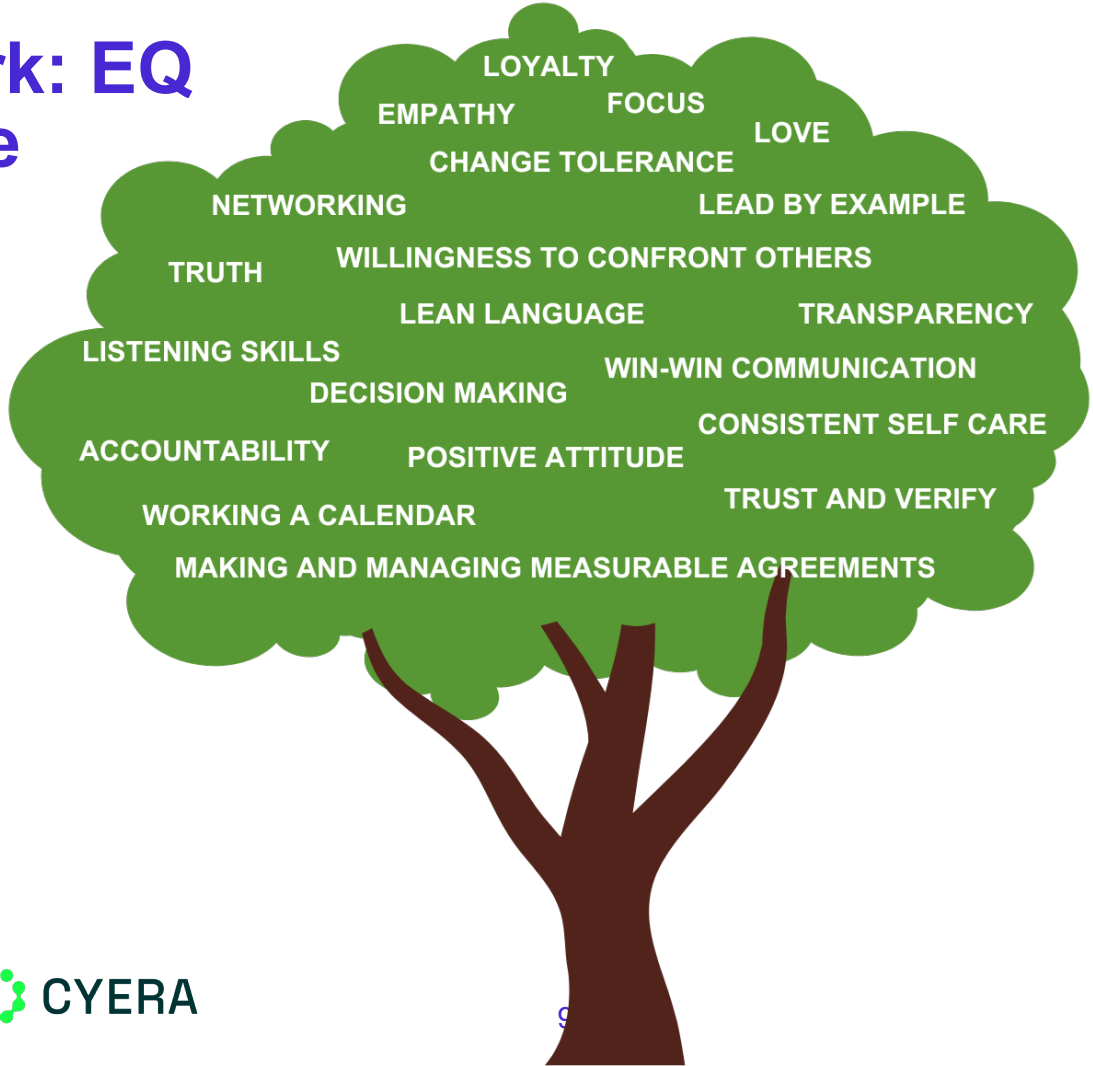


Emotionally Intelligent Managers

Words and behaviors matter



Framework: EQ Skills Tree



Framework: Top 4 Skills Needed to Lead By Example & Create Inclusive Cultures

- Making and Managing Measurable Agreements
- Being Accountable
- Win/Win Communication
- Mentoring and Being Mentored

Framework: Making and Managing Measurable Agreements

- Measurable
- Documented
- Regularly Updated

Framework: Being Accountable

- Making mistakes happens. It's how **we handle mistakes that matter.**
- The **quicker to accountability** the more possibilities to resolution and forward movement.
- Saying sorry is not a solution. The **solution is a measurable commitment to another behavior.**

Framework: Win-Win Communication

- Remember no one wants to fail; how are they measured?
- Find the win for them and you.
- Use words to create solutions.

Framework: Mentoring and Being Mentored

- Having a confidant helps you tremendously.
- Paying it forward as a mentor always keeps us sharp and involved.
- Being a mentee keeps you sharp and accountable. Seek to always have a mentor.

Framework: Pwn Your Mentorship

How to be a good mentor:

- Be reliable, available, and fully present.
- Give a full range of options and offer solutions. Don’t just tell them what to do.
- Provide specific, actionable advice.
- Assign clear tasks for the mentee to complete and follow up on.

How to be a good mentee:

- Listen actively and attentively.
- Implement what you have learned.
- Be thoughtful and reflect on the guidance you receive.

Career Vision Board Framework (part 1):

1. Current Employment: What Do You Dislike?
Identify all aspects of your current job that you find unsatisfactory or unfulfilling.

2. Desired Colleagues: Ideal Attributes
List the qualities and characteristics that matter most to you in the people you'll be working with.

3. Responsibilities: Preferred Tasks and Duties
Define the activities you want to engage in at work and the responsibilities you wish to undertake. Explain why these are important to you.

4. Technology & Frameworks: Specific Interests
Specify any particular technologies and frameworks you are eager to work with and explain your reasons.

5. Work Location: Preferred Setup
Decide whether you prefer a fully remote, hybrid, or fully in-office work environment. If hybrid, detail your ideal arrangement.

Career Vision Board Framework (part 2):

Consider whether any of your non-negotiables might hinder your career progression. If so, ask yourself: are you willing to adjust them?

6. Total Compensation: Desired Package
Outline your expectations regarding salary, health benefits, stock options, bonuses, 401k, and other perks.

7. Industry: Preferred Sectors
Indicate industries you are interested in and explain your preferences.

8. Work Travel: Acceptable Amount
Determine how much travel you're willing to undertake, including frequency, distance, and duration.

9. Work Hours: Ideal Schedule
Specify the number of hours you wish to work per day and per week. Be sure to take time zones into account.

10. Non-Negotiables
Identify the aspects of your career that are truly non-negotiable, keeping in mind that these may change over time. Use them as a foundation for both short- and long-term career planning.

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Q&A Session

Apply What You Have Learned Today

Immediate Empowerment:

- What **measurable agreements** do you have? Are they really measurable? Are they documented and are they in front of the right people? If not, solve this and manage up.
- Create a **career vision board** using the framework we shared.
- Become a **mentor and/or a mentee.**
- Create a **win-win communication visual** for your workstation so that you're always thinking about creating a win-win conversation before you are in the conversation.

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Thank you for joining us!